

## SEACW DELIVERABLE D.I.4

### “SEACW’S CONTRIBUTION TO POLICY DEVELOPMENT”

<b>Project Acronym</b>	<b>SEACW</b>
<b>Grant Agreement No.</b>	325146
<b>Project Title</b>	Social Ecosystem for Anti-aging, Capacitation and Well-Being
<b>Deliverable Reference Number</b>	SEACW_D1.4_2 <sup>nd</sup> _Version
<b>Deliverable Title</b>	Contribution to policy development
<b>Revision Number</b>	V1.0
<b>Deliverable Editors</b> <i>(main redactors)</i>	ÁLIAD UC3M

Project co-funded by the European Commission within the ICT Policy Support Programme	
Dissemination Level (choose one)	
PU	PUBLIC

Revision	Date	Description
0.0	03-01-2015	In-depth analysis of policies regarding health promotion at enterprises
0.1	20-01-2015	SWOT Analysis of policies and situation
0.2	02-02-2015	Elaboration of the report
0.3	01-03-2015	Review of the final document
1.0	20-03-2015	Updates to the final document

### Statement of originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

### Abstract

This document provides a review of the main policies concerning Active and Healthy Ageing and ICTs. This analysis involves an in-depth review, including a SWOT analysis for identifying the potential contribution of SEACW to Active and Healthy Ageing policy framework.

## Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION .....	3
2	POLICY FRAMEWORK ANALYZED IN THIS DOCUMENT .....	4
3	MAIN BARRIERS FOR ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING AND INNOVATION AT WORKPLACES.....	4
3.1	Safety and health at work in accordance with EU Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Framework 2014-2020.....	4
4	WHO position on healthy work places.....	6
4.1	Conclusions to the WHO's healthy workplaces paper .....	7
5	The need of a policy framework for facing work force ageing process.....	8
5.1	SWOT Analysis of the European policy framework concerning ageing at work .....	9
6	Contribution of SEACW to health promotion at work .....	11
7	CONCLUSIONS OF THIS DOCUMENT .....	11

## 1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in the first version of this document, submitted to the European Commission on February 2014, as a response to the great impact of the European economic and social crisis, the European Commission has worked hard in order to identify the societal challenges that must be faced under a holistic point of view.

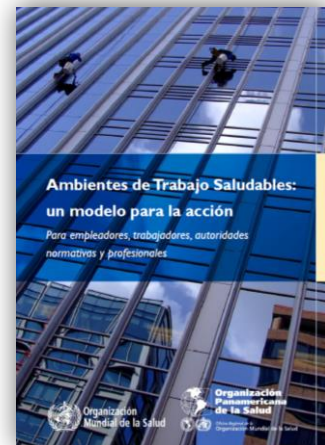
We think that the societal scope of ageing and policy framework is fully detailed along the mentioned version and within the next pages there is an important point of view to be included. In this case, we want to stress on the point of view of European companies framework for stablishing healthy workplaces for their employees, trying to anticipate the ageing process within their own organizations and also reducing important costs directly influenced by health determinants of the population.

With regard of this framework, the main legal or normative “handbook” related to the maintenance of good functional status in companies is the “Healthy Workplaces”, provided by the World Health Organization in 2010. Along this document, it is already defined and stated why private organizations must have a fundamental role as providers of health promotion to employees and society.

Indeed, companies have a multiplying role in society. Consumers do not only perceive the final value of a product, but also its quality and respect with regard of environment and safety at work. This approach of sustainability provided from companies to environment and society is the basis of current competitiveness, thus, it is expected that companies will progressively adopt ethics based on social responsibility if they wish to offer products with the quality expected from consumers and society.

Taking into consideration the unprecedented importance of ageing in our Knowledge Society, it is clear that the promotion of health, understood as a field that overcomes what it is commonly known as safety at work and produces workers as ambassadors of healthy habits, will have a very good receiving not only by consumers, but also by the whole society. People remain at work during a very important part of their lives, so that, it is quite a good opportunity to transform the work places in healthy environments where individuals may find resources to improve their healthy habits and multiply them to society.

This document pretends to add this fundamental analysis to the prior political and societal analysis already presented to the Commission and discussed during the first year review in Brussels.



## 2 POLICY FRAMEWORK ANALYZED IN THIS DOCUMENT

The main policies analysed along this document are the next:

- ➔ **WHO: Healthy workplace, Framework and Model.** World Health Organization (2010).
- ➔ **EU Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Strategic Framework 2014-2020.** European Commission (2010).

There is not any other policy in Europe for promoting health in workplaces yet but the AENOR normative for implementing the WHO principles in companies in such a certified way. In addition, some initiatives from European Commission have been initiated as Healthy Work Places Manage Stress, but they are focused on safety at work instead of promotion of health. We cannot consider the EU Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Framework as a policy for promotion of health, but maintaining safety at work.



## 3 MAIN BARRIERS FOR ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING AND INNOVATION AT WORKPLACES

### 3.1 Safety and health at work in accordance with EU Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Framework 2014-2020

Conditions at work have improved progressively since the first framework of safety at work was implemented in companies during the decade of 70's. As a prove of it, number of accidents and illnesses at work have substantially decreased thanks to the establishment of a proactive framework of safety at work, where all the risks are continuously monitored for preventing them in a methodological way.

In fact, between 1978 and 2002, progressive multiannual action programmes have been agreed by European strategies for identifying priorities and common objectives, providing the framework for coordinating national policies and promoting a holistic culture of prevention.

European Commission's goal is to ensure the safer and healthier work conditions for over 217 million workers in the EU. According to the Flash Eurobarometer on Working Conditions, a large majority of workers express satisfaction with workplace health and safety in their current job (85%) and over three quarters (77%) say that OSH information and/or training is available in their workplace.

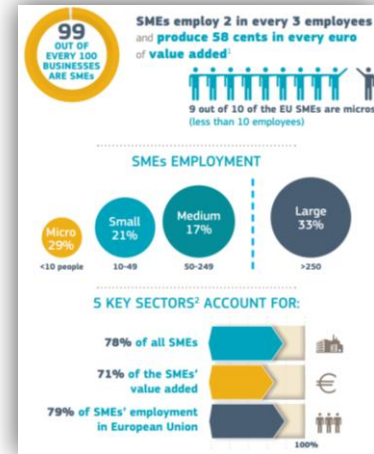
However, despite the significant reduction in accidents and better prevention, health and safety at work in the EU still needs further improvement.

- ➔ Every year more than **4.000 workers die due to accidents at work** and **more than three million workers are victims of a serious accident at work** leading to an absence from work of more than three days.
- ➔ **24.2 % of workers** (one out four) **consider** that their **health** and **safety** is **at risk** because of their work, and **25 %** declared that **work** had mainly a **negative effect** on their **health**.

- ➔ In addition to human suffering, the costs due to work-related sick leaves are unacceptably high. In **Germany, 460 million days of sick-leaves per year resulted in an estimated loss of productivity of 3.1 % of GDP.**
- ➔ **Costs for social security attributable to sickness or accidents are also unacceptably high.** In the 2010/11 fiscal year, the net government costs in the UK were estimated in **2381 million pounds.**

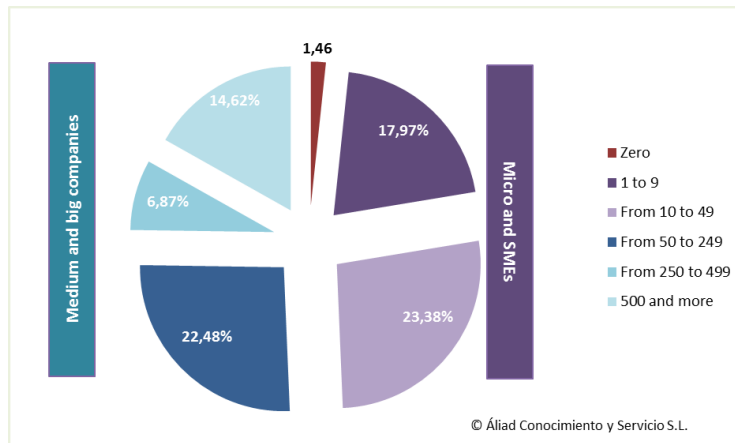
Within these conditions it seems difficult not only to ensure safety and health at work, but also to promote healthy habits among workers in order to prevent an ageing under fragility.

The main reason of these figures is based on the big proportion of SME and micro SME's, where the implementation of a framework of health and safety conditions is not one of their goals. Indeed, SMEs are the backbone of European Economy, 99 out of every 100 business are SME in Europe<sup>1</sup>. In addition, SMEs employ 2 in every 3 employees, and also produce 58 cents in every euro of value added<sup>2</sup>.



Last but not least, SMEs have specially suffered the recession<sup>3</sup>. In fact, SMEs were hit hard by the economic and financial crisis, with year-on-year deteriorations. Companies have lost competitiveness not only in terms of benefits but, mostly, in terms of quality, respect to environment and safety care.

**Figure 1. Accidents at work by size of enterprise**



Source: Eurostat (2015).

As shown in the prior figure, micro and SMEs gather most percentage of accidents at work in comparison with bigger enterprises, in other words, despite all Member States of the European Union have developed country policies for preventing safety at work, companies are not following their guidelines properly, especially SMEs.

<sup>1</sup> According to *Annual Report on European SMEs 2013/1014*.

<sup>2</sup> Net contribution of the company to the economy.

<sup>3</sup> *EU SMEs in 2012: at the crossroads*. European Commission, 2012.



Not only companies but also individuals, especially workers, must be also committed with security and safety at work; individuals have also a responsibility not only of acknowledging the specifications of safety at work, but also, they have to strictly follow all the guidelines and normative of security, otherwise, efforts coming from the national and local authorities, including companies, will not be backed up by concrete results.

## 4 WHO position on healthy work places

The World Health Organization, as stated in the Introduction of this document, has an approach to the issue of health and ageing in terms of health promotion, and not only safety at work; for the WHO, safety at work should be already implemented in companies and integrated in processes and individual customs nowadays.



Promotion of health at work is not only a way of creating a good environment for improving individual's capabilities at work, preventing absentees or accidents at work; thus, decreasing costs and increasing benefits and profitability. It's also the way for attracting social reputation in terms of social responsibility and sustainability and, therefore, a way of differentiation from competitors.

Enterprises are a key part of society. They have the power of changing the environment, social relations and they also affect to political decisions, in other words, they are an agent of change. Thus, promoting health in terms of maintaining good functional capabilities along working life cycle could not only create a social shift for avoiding the problem of dependence in an older society, but also, promoting a society of healthy habits, fostering environment, healthcare systems and improving personal and individual health factors.

Healthy work places could be understood as environments that foster health in all its meaning. According to the WHO definition of health: *"health is the state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"*<sup>4</sup>.

According to this definition, ageing process depends on the health status (physical, mental and social) along the whole life cycle of individuals; therefore, a healthy work place is the one where individuals can benefit from the best physical, mental and social health resources, at their disposal for improving their quality of life.

As WHO states in Healthy Workplace Framework and Model, the development of a Healthy Workplace Framework is justified in terms of business ethics and because of economic reasons; both aspects are interrelated and respond to a long history of global efforts intended to improve workers health.

The pure definition of healthy workplace accordingly to WHO is: *"a place where everyone works together to achieve an agreed vision for the health and well-being of workers and the surrounding community. It provides all members of the workforce with physical, psychological, social and organizational conditions that protect and promote health and safety. It enables managers and workers to increase control over their own health and to improve it, and to become more energetic, positive and contented."*

---

<sup>4</sup> WHO site: <http://www.who.int/about/definition/en/print.html>

Under this definition, and taking into consideration that 217 million people in Europe are currently working, there are important reasons for agreeing that promoting health within enterprises should be one of the best ways for facing one of the most important societal challenges of the European Commission.

Despite this document does not aim to describe the methodology for implementing a healthy workplace, it is needed to point out the four ways of enterprises in order to understand why SEACW has the possibility to contribute to policy framework.

As soon as a company decides to implement the WHO mandate on healthy workplaces, the ways to implement healthy conditions are:

1. **Through physical work environment:** ensuring and promoting work and environmental conditions that might affect to physical health of workers (i.e.: noise levels, vibrations, etc...).
2. **Through psychosocial work environment:** ensuring and promoting a good organization of work, attitudes and values of the organization, beliefs and practices that are demonstrated on a daily basis in the enterprise/organization, and which affect the mental and physical well-being of employees (i.e.: allowing flexibility times to deal with work-life conflict situations).
3. **Personal health resources in the workplace:** this means the supportive environment, health services, information, resources, opportunities and flexibility an enterprise provides to workers for improving or maintaining healthy personal lifestyle practices, as well as to monitor and support their ongoing physical, mental or social health (i.e.: providing smoking cessation programmes, training in healthy habits...).
4. **Enterprise community involvement:** because enterprises develop their activities within society and communities, they should share their activities, expertise and resources given both to the immediate local environment and the broader global environment.

#### 4.1 Conclusions to the WHO's healthy workplaces paper

The creation of a framework that promotes health at work and that transforms the work place in a healthy place, full of resources not only to maintain physical and psychosocial safety, but also that foster healthy lifestyle practices for workers and society, constitutes a different approach for fostering active and healthy ageing.

Active and healthy ageing is the set of activities aimed to maintain the best capabilities at physical, mental and social environments. Despite most of the activities of the Digital Agenda are related to improving ageing process through technologies, there are other aspects surrounding ageing (which can improve ageing process at individual and societal range) not considered under Europe 2020 with such level of detail as digital inclusion.

Of course, digital inclusion is basic for decreasing levels of fragility, improving independency and autonomy at home for elders, also monitoring health conditions along life cycle. However, as the prior deliverable submitted to the European Commission recommended, there are important barriers to be defeated before focusing on a technological point of view for fostering a response to this societal challenge, the most important among them, social inequalities.

Establishing a framework for fostering healthy lifestyles in enterprises should be a very good way for improving health and, last but not least, competitiveness.

## 5 The need of a policy framework for facing work force ageing process

Above, we have analysed the two main frameworks aimed to foster safety and health promotion at work. However, there is not actually a framework or policy to cover one important lack discovered through this analysis.

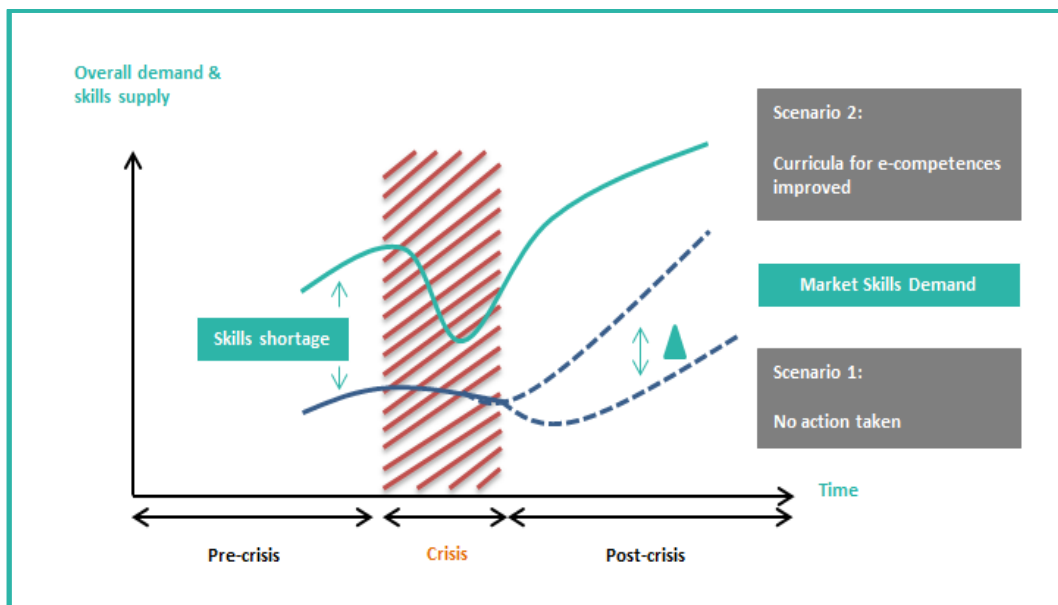
Despite some scientific and political experts are developing advices about the incoming workforce ageing process, there is not still a framework of policies or guidelines to support enterprises to start managing ageing in their own organizations.

Despite workers who are older than 50 years of age are entitled to have more difficulties for maintaining their employments or to access work market in the case they are unemployed than other population groups, three different scenarios are considered for 2030-2050:

1. In general, older workers will be completely submerged into technology use, under long-life learning programmes, and with a good health status because health promotion at education, work, etc. This workforce will be able to provide the best expertise to companies, improving competitiveness. Thus, it is necessary that European and national policies promoting active and healthy ageing, long-life learning, innovation and workforce ageing management to succeed.
2. In general, older workers will have difficulties to be adapted to new technologies use; they will be outdated with regard to process and knowledge applicable to their jobs, including a standard health status of incoming chronicity linked to unhealthy lifestyles. Thus, the promotion of policies promoting active and healthy ageing, long-life learning, innovation and workforce ageing management will fail.
3. There will be an intermediate situation, so that policies will succeed in part.

As it was reviewed in the State of the Art of SEACW, there is an important lack on e-skills to be covered at this moment if Europe wishes to maintain competitiveness.

Figure 2. E-skills demand and supply (INSEAD eLab)





A similar schema could be exactly reproduced in the case that the mentioned framework fails or succeed only in part.

In addition, other important problem of an aged workforce is absenteeism. The older we are the more absences we have because health problems (with the exception of women aged between 28 and 37 with childcare responsibilities)<sup>5</sup>. Costs paid to social security by enterprises could be highly increased both if workers do not maintain healthy lifestyles and if organizations are not respectful with safety at work. Thus, this could be another important lack for competitiveness in the case European Commission does not develop a framework to face ageing at work processes with certain urgency.

## 5.1 SWOT Analysis of the European policy framework concerning ageing at work

What comes next will help to the experts of the European Commission to have an idea about the situation of the policy framework with regard to ageing processes at work and patterns to face this situation.

The SWOT analysis is based on the analysis of policies and papers listed below:

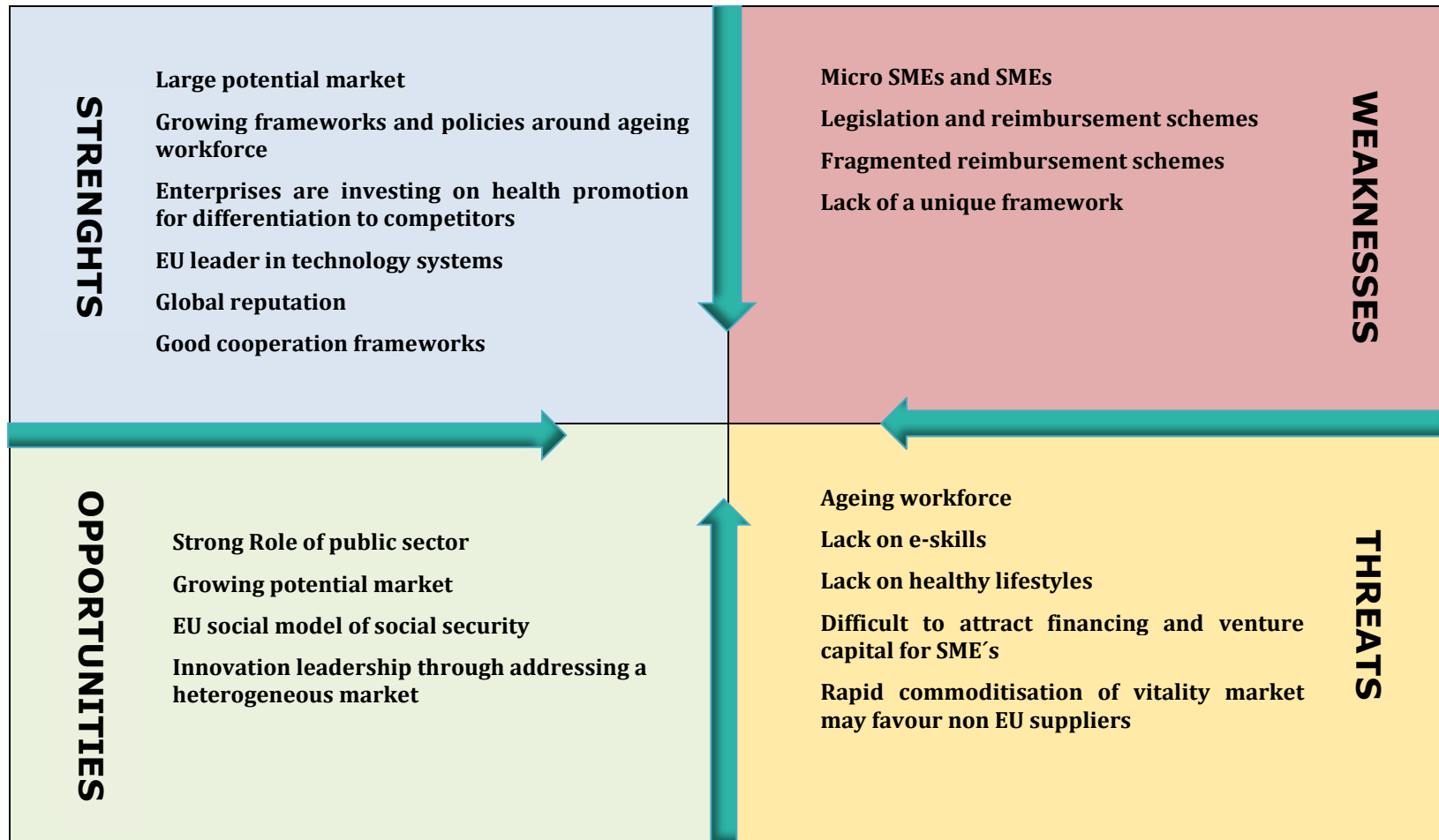
- ➔ WHO: Healthy workplace, Framework and Model. World Health Organization (2010).
- ➔ EU Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Strategic Framework 2014-2020.
- ➔ Meeting the Challenge of Europe's Aging Workforce.
- ➔ EU SMEs in 2012: at the crossroads.

After SWOT analysis, conclusions on how SEACW Ecosystem might contribute to the policy framework related to ageing at work are provided.

---

<sup>5</sup> *Absence from Work*. European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions (2010).

Figure 3. SWOT Analysis framework concerning ageing at work



## 6 Contribution of SEACW to health promotion at work

SEACW Ecosystem will be adapted for both personal health resources and for companies willing to provide specific training and information on lifestyles and healthy habits for workers, giving them a supportive environment to foster active and healthy ageing. In addition, enterprises might upload contents to the Ecosystem for the local and broader community they operate through market place or on publications, interacting if they wish with society sharing their expertise in health.



But SEACW is not only a provider of training and information of healthy habits and functional improvement. The work performed during this last two years means an expertise on ageing processes, active ageing and digital inclusion methodologies that allow the beneficiaries to be experts on advising companies both on how facing ageing processes of workforce and how implementing healthy programmes.

SEACW will be adapted to those companies willing to promote the WHO position on healthy work places, offering special courses on lifestyles (nutrition, sports, tobacco use...) and allowing them to upload publications to be shared with the community.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS OF THIS DOCUMENT

According to what analysed along this document, SEACW project aims to provide services that are aimed to fill those gaps left by the ageing workforce policy framework. Those services/products are summarized below.

Thus, the services described are a result of the policy framework analysis, where SEACW products and services attempt to cover the weaknesses detected. Hereinafter, SEACW services shall not be seen as a large compendium of services, but also as a set of strategies precisely aimed to challenge the socioeconomic context.

1. Supportive healthy environment for workers: SEACW's Ecosystem contains full resources to promote healthy lifestyles, with information of organizations of the health care sector offering services to improve health in the physical, mental and social areas.
2. Companies will share their expertise with communities: SEACW will allow those enterprises interested in sharing health contents with society by including information in news of their activities.
3. Companies will acquire knowledge on how to implement the healthy work place model proposed by the WHO with information and resources in the Ecosystem.
4. Companies will be aware of ageing workforce with information and resources.